

MINUTES

OF THE

THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

UNION BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

HELD WITH THE

MOUNT ZION CHURCH, PICKENS COUNTY, ALA.,

SEPTEMBER 22-24, 1866.

CARROLLTON:

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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

UNION BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

SATURDAY, Sept. 22d, 1866.—11 o'clock, A. M.

Anniversary Sermon by Eld. G. M. Lyles. Text—"O Lord, revive thy work."—Hab. 3: 2.

Recess of one hour, after which Association called to order by the Mod., Eld. W. Ashcraft. Prayer by Eld. C. Manly.

Letters from the Churches read by L. M. Stone and J. C. Foster, and names of Delegates enrolled.

On motion, elected a Mod. and Clerk, pending which the incumbent, Eld. A. M. Hanks, clerk of the Association during the last twenty-one years, declined re-election. Eld. J. C. Foster chosen Mod. and J. W. Taylor, Clerk.

On motion, received correspondence from other Associations: Tuscaloosa, a letter by Elds. G. Y. Browne, R. Jones, C. Manly.—Columbus, a letter by W. W. Welch.

On motion, opportunity given to unassociated churches to join this Association. Petitionary letter from Pleasant Grove church, with letter of dismission from Columbus Association, presented by W. W. Welch.

On motion, the church unanimously received and Delegate welcomed by the Moderator.

On motion, visiting brethren invited to seats.

On motion, appointed the following committees:

ON PREACHING.—W. G. Robertson, J. T. Stinson, L. M. Stone, N. W. Prince, and Pastor and Deacons of Mt. Zion church,

ON THE ORDER OF BUSINESS.—A. M. Hanks, D. Duncan and L. M. Stone.

ON NOMINATIONS.—J. A. Burgin, A. Latham and U. E. Allen.

ON FINANCE.—J. W. Hanson and H. B. Chappelle.

ON CORRESPONDENCE.—W. Ashcraft and G. M. Lyles.

ON DOCUMENTS.—N. W. Prince, P. E. Ball, M. P. Smith and J. H. Cason.

ON MISSIONARY MEETINGS.—Jas. Deloach, D. Duncan, A. M. Hanks and M. P. Smith.

On motion, report of Committee on Preaching adopted : On Sabbath, at 10 o'clock, A. M., preaching by Eld. G. Y. Browne ; at 11 o'clock, the annual Missionary sermon, according to appointment, by Eld. J. U. Foster ; and at 2 o'clock, P. M., preaching by Eld. C. Manly.

Prayer by Eld. M. P. Smith. Adjourned till Monday 9 o'clock, A. M.

NOTE—Eld. G. Y. Browne, by request, preached under the arbor during the afternoon session.

S A B B A T H .

Exercises conducted according to previous appointment :

At 10 o'clock, A. M., instructive sermons from 1. Tim. 1 : 11.

At eleven, a well matured and appropriate discourse from the words "Except these abide in the ship, ye can not be saved."—Acts 27 : 31. (Collected for Foreign Missions, \$43 90.)

At two P. M., a highly practical and instructive sermon, suggested by the words "Baalam also, the son of Beor they slew with the sword."—Num. 31 : 8.

MONDAY, 9 o'clock, P. M.

Association convened ; prayer by Eld. Jas. Deloach. Report of committee on Order of Business, adopted, and subsequent proceedings conducted accordingly, as follows :

1st. Roll called. On motion, clerk ordered to mark as present those who, though absent on Monday, were present on Saturday.—On motion, reconsidered. Motion to excuse the brethren embraced in the previous motion, lost.

2nd. Minutes of Saturday read and adopted.

3rd. Constitution and Rules of Decorum read.

4th. Visiting brethren invited to seats.

5th. Circular prepared by L. M. Stone, read and ordered to be printed with the Minutes. On motion, excused W. Ashcraft to attend a funeral.

6th. Appointed messengers to corresponding Associations as follows :—*Columbus* ; Pleasant Hill church, Lowndes county, Miss ; Sat. before 2nd Sab. Sept., '67 ; D. Duncan, J. A. Spillar, G. M. Lyles, Jas. Deloach, S. J. Spruill, A. Latham and J. A. Burgin.—*Tuscaloosa* ; Little Sandy church, near Tuscaloosa, Sat. before 3rd Sab. Sept., '67 ; J. C. Foster, M. P. Smith, J. W. Taylor, N. W. Prince, W. G. Robertson, and J. Doughty.

7th. Report of Union Meetings, adopted as follows :—1st Dis.—

Bethlehem, Frid. before 3rd Sab. Aug., '67. Int. sermon by Eld. Jas. Deloach, Alt. Eld. R. Wilkins ; Visitors, G M Lyles, A A Spillar, D Duncan, and J P Lee. 2nd Dis.—Spring Hill, Pickens county, Frid. before 4th Sab. July, '67, Int. sermon by Eld. J M Land, Alt., Eld. J S Wooten ; Missionary sermon by Eld. D Duncan, Alt., Eld. J N Acker ; Visitors, A M Hawks, and J W Taylor.—3rd Dis.—Carrollton, Frid. before 2nd Sab. Aug., '67. Int. sermon by J W Taylor, Alt. Eld. J H Cason ; Visitors, Jas. Deloach, A A Spillar, D Duncan, and A Latham. 4th Dis.—Shiloh, Frid. before 3rd Sab. Aug. '67. Int. sermon by Eld. W. Ashcraft, Alt. Eld. J C Foster ; Missionary sermon, Eld. J C Foster, Sab. 11 o'clock, A. M. Visitors, M Taylor, and J W Taylor.

8th. Report of committee on Missionary meetings, adopted. (For substance of this report see table, page 8 and 9.)

9th. Report of Committee on Documents, adopted as follows:—In examining the letters from the churches, nothing is found requiring the action of this body except the request for advice with reference to the management of the colored membership. We regard this as a subject of great importance, and one fraught with difficulties and dangers. We recognize the importance of using every means in the power of the churches to replace the suspicion which seems to pervade the minds of our colored brethren, by that confidence which they formerly manifested in us. Wherever the number of colored members is large enough, we advise, that the white and colored congregations be separated, the same Pastor serving both, either on different days or at different hours of the same day. Organize a separate conference for them and require them to transact the business ; such as receiving and dealing with members. In cases of restoration, let them recommend the applicants. Appoint a committee of discreet brethren to superintend and see that all is done in proper order, and require their clerk to make a monthly report to the white conference.

Respectfully submitted, N. W. PRINCE, Chairman.

10th. Report of Committee on Nominations, adopted as follows—Next Int. sermon, Eld. J W Taylor, Alt., Eld. D Duncan. Missionary sermon by Eld. J H Cason, Alt., Eld. G M Lyles. Circular Letter on "The Evils of Dancing," Eld. W Ashcraft.

11th. Delegates appointed to Bap. State Convention to meet at Selma, Frid. before 2nd Sab. Nov., '66, as follows:—W Ashcraft, J C Foster, J H Cason, J W Taylor, L M Stone, N W Prince, W G Robertson, A P Bush, R H Foster, and J T Stinson.

12th. Letters to the Tuscaloosa and Columbus Associations and to the Ala. Bap. State Convention, prepared by Com. on Correspondence.

13th. Report of committee on Finance, adopted :

Received from Churches for Minutes,	\$61 00
" " " " Association,	37 00
" " " " Foreign Missions,	17 00
" " " " Home Missions,	53 50
" " " " Bible Fund,	18 25
" " " " Min. Education,	1 00

Amount collected on Sabbath for Foreign Missions,

J. W. HANSON, Chairman.

14th. Miscellaneous Business. On motion, concurred with Fourth Dist. in appointing next annual session of the Association to be held with Grant's Creek church, Tuscaloosa county.

On motion, ordered clerk to arrange for printing and distributing Minutes, and to retain \$25 00 out of the Association fund, for his services.

A motion to add the remainder of the Association fund to the scanty Minute fund being withdrawn, on motion, ordered clerk to pay said remainder to Eld. J N Acker, Messenger to Tuscaloosa association.

On motion, Pleasant Grove church assigned to First District.

Ordered clerk to include in printed report on Finance any contributions which may yet be made prior to printing Minutes.

On motion, following query introduced : "Has a church the right to restore an excommunicated minister to his functions as a minister, upon his application for restoration ?" After discussion, the following answer returned : Being an independent body, she has the *right*, but we would advise a most serious, prayerful, deliberate and prudent exercise of it in every case, and that she should act as in case of ordination as prescribed, Art. 13, Constitution.

On motion, query introduced : "What relation does one with a letter of dismission sustain to the church by which it was given ?"—

On motion, discussion suspended until afternoon session.

Adjourned till 2 o'clock, P. M. Prayer by Eld. D Duncan.

MONDAY, 2 o'clock, P. M.

Prayer by Eld A A Spillar.

Discussion of query resumed. Following answer, on motion, returned : He is amenable to the church for any immoral conduct, but deprives himself of all the privileges of the church.

Resolved, That the thanks of this Association be tendered to the members of Mt. Zion church, and to the community for the kindness and hospitality extended to the Delegates and Visitors during its session. Adjourned.

Appropriate remarks by the Mod. were followed by singing and giving the parting hand. Prayer by Eld. A M Hanks.

JOHN C. FOSTER, Mod.

J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk.

NOTE.—Eld. R. Jones preached under the arbor during the morning, and Eld. G M Lyles, during the evening session.

CIRCULAR LETTER,

WRITTEN BY L. M. STONE.

THE DUTY AND IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY PRAYER.

The duty of prayer results from the condition of our being, and from the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. Man is a dependent creature, powerless, ignorant of the future, sinful and condemned. He needs instruction, support and pardon. These blessings come from God alone, who is under no obligation to confer them upon us. Our conduct has rendered us unworthy of the least of these favors. Yet we continually receive from our Maker "every good and perfect gift."—"In him we live, and move, and have our being." Is it not our duty then to thank him for these blessings? Should we not ask his pardon for the offences we are continually committing? Should we not petition for a continuation of those favors, so essential to our happiness and existence? Is it not becoming in us to express our faith in the existence and goodness of God, and to rejoice in the glorious promises of His holy word? Should we not "give unto the Lord the glory due to his name"? "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

But prayer is expressly commanded in the Scriptures—"Pray without ceasing." "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanks-giving, let your requests be made known unto God." "I will, therefore, that men pray every where; lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting." "Serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer." Our Lord Jesus Christ bids us "ask," and promises "it shall be given." The apostle James tells us "we receive not, because we ask not." "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." "Praying always with all prayer," that is, with all kinds of prayer. These general commands refer to all the different kinds of prayer, and imply the duty of family prayer as well as every other.

The very temper of mind that prayer produces, promotes our happiness. Prayer calls into exercise the feelings of gratitude to God—of submission to His will, of love and of veneration for His perfections, and of sorrow for our transgressions. In the exercise of prayer these feelings grow stronger, and finally become habitual—our hearts become purified, the baser passions are subdued and our highest happiness is promoted. “How good is God, who will not only give us what we pray for, but will *reward us for going to him*, and laying our wants before him.”

WHY THE FAMILY SHOULD PRAY.

God confers blessings upon us not only as *individuals*, but as families. The domestic relation is the source of much of our happiness. Peculiar responsibilities rest upon parents. Special and important duties devolve upon children. It is proper for us to ask God to guide and direct us in the performance of those duties. Our children are daily exposed to the dangers, the temptations and the ignorance of their youth. A thousand evil influences are ready to assail them.—Opinions and habits, novel and attractive, but fatal to happiness, meet them on every hand; companions most dangerous and corrupting seek their ruin. Away from the watchful eye of the parent, members of the family must encounter these temptations. But God is every where. His all-seeing eye marks each dangerous influence, and He can lead your child in safety through every peril. As a family, thus constantly exposed, we should seek God’s protecting care. Daily we should offer up around the family altar, the sacrificial praise for his preserving mercy. We should ask of him strength to resist all the follies of the world, and wisdom to guide us in training up our family for a useful and holy life.

INFLUENCE OF FAMILY PRAYER UPON THE YOUNG.

The domestic circle exercises an important influence in all civil government. They are instrumentalities by which the young are trained up to be good citizens and true christians. It is there that the infant is prepared for government and for society, by placing it from the beginning under direction and control. The family organization is a nursery for the State. It contains the rudiments of an empire. There the child grows up under a system, in which he yields to the authority of a superior; and thus learns at home the duty of obedience to the laws of the State, which are so soon to operate upon him. Well regulated christian families also constitute the hope of the church. It is there the young are trained up to be, not only good citizens, but true and consistent christians. Disorderly family arrangements, and loose domestic government, with children growing up under no subjection are the fruitful source of every crime, and the surest means of overthrowing all social order. A nation with all its families religiously governed and with parents “ruling their children and their own houses well,” would have little need of criminal laws, jails or penitentiaries. How important then, that the members of the family be trained up, “in the fear and admonition of the Lord.” This training must commence at the family altar. Family prayer is the most effec-

tual means of giving this religious training to the children of the household. The understanding of childhood will thus receive its first light from the truths of the Gospel. It will become familiarized with religious subjects and with religious duties. By making family prayer constant and prominent in the domestic arrangement, you teach to the young its importance. Their minds are then impressible. They then look up to their parents, with the tenderest affection and confidence, and with proper care the great interests of the soul may be made to claim their attention, and the image of God stamped on their hearts. Religion will thus become associated with all the sacred recollections of childhood, and of home. Our earliest and warmest sympathies will be enlisted in its favor. The character of WASHINGTON was unquestionably moulded by a mother's influence. Early in life he was trained to a love of *truth*, to *diligence* and *virtue*. The Bible, sermons, and books of practical piety constituted the reading selected for him in his boyhood by his widowed mother, and was the foundation of his christian life. JONATHAN EDWARDS, one of the most eminent divines of the world, received his earliest religious impressions at the family altar, listening to the prayers of a pious father, who for *sixty years* had been an humble pastor. EDWARD PAYSON was converted in childhood, and attributed all his religious hopes, as well as his usefulness in life as a minister of God, to the early pious instructions and prayers of his parents. The mother of Dr. DODDRIDGE would, during his boyhood, take him in her lap and tell him stories from the scripture scenes painted on the old Dutch tiles around the fire place. These lessons were *never forgotten* and had much to do in forming the character of that great and good man. When very young, Dr. ALEXANDER CARSON was devoted to the service of God. Family prayer and the teaching of pious parents, early imbued his mind with the doctrines and promises of God's word. When he grew up, he invariably called his own family twice a day to the throne of grace; and such was the effect that he lived to see the *last of thirteen* children converted to God and rejoicing in the faith of their crucified Redeemer. JOHN RANDOLPH in early youth was taught at his mother's knee to lisp out his evening prayers. These early lessons were never entirely effaced from his memory. For many years, it is true, he lived in open derision and mockery of religion. Coming into life when the folly and madness of atheism was seeking to undermine the foundation of morals and religion, he, like many other gifted spirits of that age, caught the contagion.— But the impressions produced by the *prayers of his sainted mother* were too strong and too deep to be eradicated by all the ingenious sophistry of infidelity. His mind would go back to its early associations, and at last he found consolation alone in that religion which a pious mother, on bended knee had taught him around the family altar, with his little hands clasped in hers and lifted to heaven. The mind thus trained and purified in childhood is,

“ Like the vase, in which roses have once been distilled;
 You may brake, you may ruin the vase if you will,
 But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.”

[Continued on page 10.]

UNION BAPTIST

		DELEGATES.		ST	
CHURCHES.] COUNTIES.		Absentees marked with a star, * Those absent on Monday, †		Dismissed by Letter,	Received by Letter,
				Baptized,.....	
FIRST DISTRICT.	Bethlehem, Pickens,	J. F. Doughty, R. Bridges,* J. Stokes,*	...	...	...
	Arbor Spring, "	D. C. Leonard, S. W. Leonard, N. Sental,*	...	...	...
	Liberty, "	J. DeLoach, R. B. Wilkins,* J. Williams,*	...	...	...
	Mount Pleasant, "	I. Hollinsworth, M. Taylor, F. M. Walker,	..	11	14
	Fellowship, "	W. G. Robertson, J. T. Gardner,* J. D. Johnson*	...	...	...
	Ebenezer, "	S. Hildreth, A. Shepherd, H. Easterling,...	...	...	14
	Corinth, Tuscaloosa,	W. C. Smith, J. Holeman, J. W. Mitchell,*	2	8	
	Spring Hill, Fayette	M. M. Blaylock,* G. Gibson,* J. D. Walker*	1	..	
	Pleasant Grove, "	W. W. Welch,† F. W. Stokes,* W. Vail,*	12	10	14
	Providence, Pickens	P. Kilpatrick, J. S. Wooten* A. J. Richardson*	..	3	
SECOND DISTRICT.	South Carolina, "	D. Duncan, S. J. Spruill, M. W. Regan,*	10	1	14
	Mineral Spring, "	Geo. M. Lyles, J. M. Foster, J. S. Hoard,	..	3	...
	Oak Ridge, "	Jas. A. Burgin, J. P. Lee, J. L. Coleman,	..	3	
	Spring Hill, "	J. M. Land, J. T. Stinson,† J. P. Gates,†	7	2	
	Hebron, "	D. N. Hicks,† J. F. Cockrell,* W. Whitaker*	..	..	1
	Big Creek, "	A. Latham, A. A. Spillar, J. N. Acker,*	2	5	
	Cross Roads, "	U. E. Allen, Wm. S. Bryan,† R. Oglesby,*	4	2	
	Pickensville, "	J. T. Lang, R. T. Hanks, A. P. Bush,*...	...	...	...
	Carrollton, "	L. M. Stone, J. W. Taylor, J. H. Cason,†	5	..	
	Euon, "	H. B. Chappelle, P. E. Ball,† F. H. Ball,†	9	8	
THIRD DISTRICT.	Unity, "	A. M. Hanks, J. W. Hanson, E. Boone,...	..	1	
	Mount Zion, "	W. P. Smarr, B. C. Walker, Thomas Locke,	...	...
	Forest, "	W. Ashcraft, A. J. Slaughter, W. Slaughter,	4	1	
	Shiloh, "	J. R. Smith, J. Franklin,* J. N. Garner,*	2	..	
	Benlah, Greene co.	M. P. Smith, N. Cobb, E. H. Lamb,*.....	...	...
	Bethel, Tuscaloosa,	N. W. Prince, G. A. Stewart,* W. Salmon,*	1	6	
	New Hope, "	J. M. Smith, J. H. Robertson,* I. Robertson*	1	1	
	Zion, "	J. Parker, J. Shirley, J. M. Parker,.....	1	..	
	Grant's Creek, "	J. C. Foster, R. A. Kitchens,* R. A. Foster*	11	4	
			72	69	1

NOTE.—Statistical returns of Bethlehem Church not furnished the Printer.

ASSOCIATION.

STATISTICS.

CONTRIBUTORS.

								PASTORS.	THE TIME OF HOLDING MIS- SIONARY MEET- ING IN 1867.
Decased,.....	White Males,.....	White Females,...	Colored,.....	Total,.....	Minutes,.....	Association,.....	Mission, Bible Fund, &c.,.....		
3	4	19	...	23	\$2,00	\$1,00	.....	.....	3d Sab. Aug.
7	12	16	2	30	1,00	1,00	.....	R. B. WILKINS	2d " July.
0 1	24	56	...	80	3,00	1,50	.....	I HOLINSWORTH	4th " July.
1 2	9	19	...	28	1,50	1,00	8,00	W. ASHCRAFT,	1st " Aug.
2	17	39	1	57	2,00	1,00	.....	J. N. ACKER,	1st " July.
1	4	8	1	13	2,00	.....	.....	A. A. SPILLAR,	4th " Aug.
8	19	28	2	49	2,00	1,00	.....	.....	3d " July.
4 2	27	65	16	108	.....	.....	.....	.....	2d " Aug.
1	4	26	25	55	1,00	1,00	.....	.....	4th " Aug.
0 1	13	40	27	80	2,00	1,00	.....	.....	2d " Aug.
2 3	10	25	5	40	1,50	1,50	.....	M. W. REGAN,	3d " July.
7	12	23	16	51	2,00	1,00	.....	G. M. LYLES,	1st " July.
4	23	27	3	53	3,00	1,50	.....	W. ROBERTSON,	3d " Aug.
7 3	11	18	12	41	1,50	1,50	.....	G. M. LYLES,	4th " July.
6 2	26	69	20	115	4,00	1,00	.....	JAS. DELOACH,	3d " Aug.
21	14	29	6	49	2,00	1,00	.....	G. M. LYLES,	2d " July.
3	21	31	13	65	2,00	2,00	.....	D. DUNCAN,	1st " Aug.
2 8	15	47	9	71	2,50	2,50	.....	J. W. TAYLOR,	1st " Aug.
2 4	18	38	120	176	3,00	2,00	.....	W. ASHCRAFT,	2d " Aug.
3 2	36	51	78	165	3,00	2,00	.....	J. W. TAYLOR,	4th " July.
1 1	19	38	10	67	3,00	2,00	.....	A. M. HANKS,	1st " July.
6 1	25	46	59	130	2,00	1,00	.....	W. ASHCRAFT,	2d " July.
7	10	32	...	42	2,00	1,00	.....	W. ASHCRAFT,	3d " July.
3 3	47	95	22	164	3,00	2,00	15,50	M. P. SMITH,	3d " Aug.
4	30	98	25	153	2,50	1,50	.....	M. P. SMITH,	1st " July.
9 7	13	28	37	78	2,00	2,00	6,25	R. JONES,	2d " July.
6 50	15	39	9	63	1,50	.....	.....	M. P. SMITH,	4th " July.
11 12	33	62	164	259	3,00	2,00	60,00	J. PARKER,	2d " Aug.
6 50	511	1112	682	2305	61,00	37,00	89,75	J. C. FOSTER,	1st " Aug.

THE DUTY OF FAMILY PRAYER TAUGHT BY EXAMPLES.

The duty of family prayer is taught us by scriptural examples.—When the ark rested upon Ararat “Noah went forth and his sons, and his wife, and his son’s wife with him :” * * “And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord ;” * * “And God blessed Noah and his sons.” This altar is the first of which we have any record. God was pleased with this religious devotion of Noah and his family and blessed them. Abraham, the father of the faithful and the friend of God, was distinguished for his family piety. For this he was blessed. “I know Abraham, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken.” Wherever Abraham dwelt, there God had an altar. When he pitched his tent at Bethel, “there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord.” When he found that the covenant was established in another branch of his family, Abraham felt solicitous for his son Ishmael and prayed to God in his behalf. His prayer was answered. God blessed his son Ishmael and made him the head of a great and prosperous people. Look at the determination of Joshua, who declared to all Israel : “Choose you this day whom ye will serve, * * * as for me and *my house* we will serve the Lord.” When David had brought the ark of God unto Jerusalem with gladness, with sacrifices, and with thanksgiving, and had blessed the people, “he returned to bless his household.” Job, fearing that his children had sinned, offered daily worship in his house, made sacrifices unto the Lord, in order to prevent his wrath, and their punishment. For Job said, “it may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.”

The pious and charitable Cornelius established the worship of God in his house. He is described as a “devout man, and one that feared God with all his house.” The house of Lydia, Paul’s first convert in Europe, was a house of prayer. So was that of Mary and Martha, where Christ performed the most wonderful miracle on record. The jailor “rejoiced believing in God with all his house.” They had been brought from death unto life, and it was a happy house. Happy like that of Zachæus, when Jesus told him, “this day is salvation come to this house.” God will bless the household where his name is honored, and where the children are taught to remember their creator in the days of their youth.

THE YOUNG ENCOURAGED TO PRAY.

God’s holy word is full of encouragement and of bright promise to the young. “They that seek me early *shall* find me.” When children were brought to Christ his disciples rebuked the parents. “But Jesus *called them unto him* and said, suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not : for such is the kingdom of God.” It was in his childhood that Hannah dedicated Samuel to the Lord, and was visited by him. The spirit of the Lord came upon David while he was yet the youngest of the sons of Jesse, and when among the mountains of Bethlehem he kept his father’s sheep. It was early in

life, when Moses fed the flock of Jethro in the desert, that God sent him to Pharaoh and appointed him to bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt. Josiah, while he was yet young began to seek after the God of David, his father, and he broke down the altars of Baalam, and the molten images, and all the idols throughout the land of Israel. God blessed Samson when a child. These examples are full of encouragement to youthful piety. In every part of scripture the season of youth is spoken of with the deepest tenderness. Nothing is so acceptable in the sight of Heaven as the offering of the young heart, in the very morning of life. Then, the Lord himself will be their shepherd. Amid the green pastures and by the still waters of youth he will make their "souls to repose." And when the days of trial and of temptation come, as come they will in this world, his spirit will arm and strengthen them for the conflict. His goodness and mercy will follow them, and when at last "the silver cord is loosed" or "the golden bowl is broken," their spirits will return to God, and they shall dwell in the House of the Lord forever. What an incentive to parents to embrace christianity when the eternal interests of their children so much depend upon it. How bitter will be our punishment when we reflect that our principles, our influence, our example have dragged down to the pit of despair and death the children with which God hath blessed us. We are responsible to God for the manner in which we discharge our duties to our children. It is impossible to avoid that responsibility. He will hold us to strict accountability, and if our children perish through our neglect, or evil influence, God will judge us for it in the great day. It is the part of wisdom for parents to understand and remember their responsibilities. They have charge of the young mind, when it is tender and impressible, and when it can be moulded into any shape. They are to give that form and character to the immortal spirit which it is to bear throughout eternity. Kind affections may be aroused in the young heart, and made the habit of life--true and worthy motives may be inspired. The sense of duty and of moral responsibility may be unfolded, and a profound religious feeling awakened. This can be done around the fire-side, and at the family altar, by precept and example. The good seed may thus be sown before the world has opportunity to sow the tares. In accomplishment of this there is no instrumentality so efficient as family prayer. Family prayer will turn the attention to God early in life. Religious impressions thus created will last us to the grave. Who can ever forget the prayers of that venerated father who amid the quietness and sanctity of home, bows himself regularly around the family altar with his children, and there breathes out his soul in prayer to his Maker for his protection and for his blessings upon his household? Who can forget the love and tender admonition of that mother who first taught his lisping tongue to pray, and who first bent his little knees around the fire-side altar and with her hand upon his head, prayed God to bless and protect her child and to lead him in safety through all the dangers and temptations of life. That father and mother may long since have been gathered to their God. Their names may long since have been ef-

faced even from the marble of the grave-yard ; but their influence will live in our hearts, and in spite of the wickedness of the world will go with us through life, and like the "candle of the Lord" guide our erring footsteps in safety through this world, and light us through the "valley of the shadow of death" to our homes in Heaven.

THE PIOUS PARENT'S EXAMPLE.

It is by family prayer that the *example* of the christian parent acts with greatest force upon the young. *Private* prayers are not witnessed, and consequently do not act at all upon children as examples.—The parent's attendance upon *public worship*, they may ascribe to fashion, or to a regard for appearances or character, or to some other motive besides a sense of duty to God. But the child knows that no such motive can prompt the offering up of family prayer. When in the sacred privacy of home the father or mother gathers the family around the domestic altar, and there in simplicity, and humility and faith offers up prayer and thanks-giving to God for his mercies, there is no misinterpreting the motive of their conduct. Such holy examples, such consistent religious conduct, such acting out in every day life of our christian professions, will teach the young the sincerity and the power of our religion, and in spite of the scoffing and skepticism of the world, will furnish a living argument for christianity which may lead thousands to embrace "the truth as it is in Jesus." What unbounded influence will such a parent exert over his household ! What a moral power will he exercise ! How sacred will his advice and admonition be regarded ! The acts of such a parent "giveth light to all that are in the house." But if he lives in the constant neglect of family worship, if he seldom reads the scriptures at home and manifests little interest in the conversion of his children ; if his fields—his merchandise—his office, and money-making engross all his time, his acts give the lie to his professions, and although he may occasionally deliver to the young, moral lectures, which cost but little, the only response he can expect to receive will be, "Physician heal thyself."—Grave lectures from the christian parent on the importance of religion, are "mere sounding brass" and solemn mockery, unless accompanied by acts which demonstrate the faith that is in them. We should not only feel and talk religion, but we should *live* religion. The best course to train up a child in the way he should go, is for the parent to travel that way himself. "Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord, and *walketh in his ways*. For thou shalt eat the labor of thine hands : happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house ; thy children like olive plants round about thy table." The Bible contains no such promises to the family that forget God, but the most terrible threatenings are denounced against them. "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and *upon the families that call not upon thy name*." Is it strange that the mother who neglects to train up her children under the pious influences of home, should see them grow up profane swearers, blasphemers and Sabbath-breakers ? Is it strange that the father who has never knelt with his little boy in prayer or asked God to shield him from the vice and temptations of life, should,

when he grows up, meet him at the dram-shop, the race-course and the gambling table. "Whatsoever a man *soweth*, that shall he also *reap*." And the harvest, whether good or evil, "is always more abundant than the seed that were sown. Well did David exhort his son Solomon. "And thou Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy fathers and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind : for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts : if thou seek him he will be found of thee ; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever."

THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD WORK AT HOME.

Every christian has a most important work to perform at home.—Our families and our homes are the sources of our highest happiness. Those whom we love most, and for whose temporal and spiritual welfare we are most concerned are of our own household. Our tenderest emotions relate to them ; we feel the deepest interest in seeing them virtuous, contented and happy. In sickness they claim our deepest sympathy. Our highest pleasure is to provide for their wants, and to train them up for future usefulness and happiness. Every prospect of earthly happiness is connected with those of our own homes. When perplexed with the cares and anxieties of life, when wearied by labor and exhausted in the struggle for wealth and power, it is to our homes that we look for repose, for contentment, for sympathy and love. There every care is divided, every sorrow diminished, and every joy redoubled. There we have no borrowed part to act, no weakness to hide, no mistakes to dread. There we forget the rude and bitter contests of life, and give ourselves up to gentler feelings and purer thoughts. What hallowed recollections cluster around our Homes ! How ought our hearts to be lifted up in gratitude to God for the blessings of Home ! There his mighty arm has protected us ; there his providence has supplied our wants, and filled our families with rejoicing. There has been preserved the lives of those near and dear to us—and *there* should the whole family daily gather around the altar of prayer, with united feelings of gratitude and love to God, and in humble acknowledgement of His goodness and mercies. The sympathy and the endearing ties that bind together the family circle and the warm affection that glows in the heart of father, mother, sister and brother will ever prompt the true christian to desire and labor for the conversion of his household.

After finding Christ, Andrew made it his first business to go in search of his brother Peter, to tell him the glad news that he had found the Messiah, and to bring him to Jesus. John seeks his brother James, and giving him the news of a savior leads him to Christ — After Jesus had restored the demoniac, he said to him: "*Go home to thy friends*, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." The work which Christ required him to do, was at *home* among his *friends*. There, in his own household, he must proclaim "how great things the Lord hath done for him." So is it the duty of every christian to work at home, to make his house the home of prayer, to erect the family altar, to show the family of his conversion, and to tell his children "what great things the Lord hath done for him." Dives, in

torment, offered up a prayer that Lazarus might be sent to his *father's house* to warn his *five brothers* that they come not "into this place of torment." His own example may have influenced his brothers to neglect their immortal souls. But it was too late for Dives to pray. "The night cometh when no man can work." The "great gulf was fixed," and no prayer is answered that comes from the region of despair and death. God had prospered the rich man in this life—but he never thanked him for it. No family altar was ever erected in his house. He gave no warning *then* to his five brethren "to flee from the wrath to come." Prayers for our brothers and sisters should be offered up around the family altar, for, if like Dives, we wait to pray for them from the burning and bottomless pit, it will avail nothing.

HOW TO IMPROVE IN PRAYER.

It is a subject of general complaint among the churches that family prayer is so much neglected. Embarrassment and inability to pray, are the usual excuses for this neglect. But the truth is, *our not praying* is the cause of this embarrassment. All of our "gifts improve with the using." We want *practice*. If the heart is right, we are all abundantly able to pray. Dr. TEASDALE, in one of his discourses, says, "I do not believe that a person can know enough to be converted, whose gifts, if properly cultivated, would not be a blessing to the church and to the world." No great learning is required; indeed the most unlettered often excel in prayer. They have been taught of God. The constant practice of prayer has qualified them for exercising their gifts acceptably. "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." If the christian has hitherto neglected family prayer for any cause, let him commence it without delay; God will help him and bless his efforts. Jesus says, "My brethren are those which hear the word of God, and *do it*." In the performance of this duty, the christian will derive aid from reading a portion of God's word at family worship, which will furnish him matter for prayer. Especially will he be assisted by the study of the Psalms of David—the prophecies of Isaiah, and some of the chapters in the Gospels and Epistles. Abundant material for prayer may be suggested by meditation upon religious subjects, by conversations with christians about divine things, by careful self-examination, so as to learn the wants of our own soul; by attention to the affairs of religion around us, and to the spiritual condition of our churches—by the study of God's word and his works—by reflections upon our weak and helpless condition, our unprofitable lives, and upon our great need of God's protection and guidance. We can find matter for prayer in the gratitude we owe to God for the plan of salvation, and for "his mercy and goodness that have followed us all the days of our lives"—in the sins we have to confess and the pardon we need; in the interest we feel for the unconverted and for the revival of religion; for the church of which we are members, our pastor, our brethren and their families. Can the head of the family not find matter for thanks-giving to God for food, and home and friends, and protection from the "pestilence that walketh in darkness and the desolation that wasteth at noonday?"

—for unity and brotherly love ; for the trials that have been sacrificed to their good, and for spiritual blessings ? Surely upon some of these subjects the Christian can find something to say to God around the family altar. But if he is yet unable to pray, let him confess it and ask God to help him. Christ says, “ I will give you a *mouth* and *wisdom* which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist.” “ But if any man lack *wisdom*, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given to him.” “ The holy scriptures are able to make you *wise unto salvation*.”— “ The testimony of the Lord is sure, making *wise* the simple.” Our prayers should be plain and pointed. Beautiful and elaborate prayers may please the fashionable and the fashion, but God regards the language of the heart, which is simple and sincere, solemn and unaffected. In all our prayers we should have some *special object* in view—we should pray for something and not give utterance to mere generalities. Our prayers should be uttered deliberately and with becoming humility. We should avoid *preaching* in prayer. We go to the throne of grace to thank and supplicate God, and not to make an argument to others, or to reprove or rebuke them. Our prayers should be *short*. The advice of Solomon should be considered on this subject : “ Be not rash to utter any thing before God ; God is in Heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be *few*.” Our Saviour says, “ When ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do : for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking.”—How brief was Peter’s prayer, “ Lord save or I perish.” So was that of the dying thief upon the cross ; and that of Elijah ; and of the Publican. The Lord’s prayer is a model for our imitation. Its structure indicates that it is a family prayer. It is to be a *daily* supplication—“ give us **THIS DAY** our daily bread.” The words, “ Our Father,” instead of *my* Father—“ forgive *us* our trespasses”—“ lead *us* not into temptation”—“ deliver *us* from evil,” adapt it to the wants of petitioners as a **FAMILY**, bowing daily around the household altar, and imploring the supply of their returning wants. Prayer is the offering up of our desires in entire subjection to the will of God ; therefore we must pray in **FAITH**, believing that God will grant our petitions, provided He in his infinite wisdom and goodness sees it will be best. “ And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, **BELIEVING**, ye shall receive.” Many of our prayers are doubtless refused in mercy to us. We should seek the assistance of God’s holy spirit in prayer. “ God is a spirit, and should be worshipped in spirit and in truth.” Prayer in the family should be regular. On no occasion should it be postponed, if possible to be attended to. It should not be considered the business of the Sabbath merely, but a regular everyday duty—a part of the family organization and employment ; the one thing needful ; the great duty of this life. By going into the presence of God daily, and exposing to his all-seeing eye every thought and act of our lives, we are kept constantly on our guard against the approach of evil. But we should be cautious not to make the exercise wearisome, and should strive to make it as engaging and attractive as possible. Singing should accompany it when practicable. Short

explanations might be given of different passages of the Bible, which would interest and instruct the family, as well as induce study on the part of the parent. We should be on our guard not to offend the young by too much harshness, or rigorous formality. If the parent's piety be morose, and be accompanied with stern and forbidding manners, and be perpetually breaking in upon the innocent recreations of the family, surfeiting them with moral lectures, there is danger the children will imbibe hostility against all seriousness and religion as inconsistent with every plan of a pleasant and peaceful life. True religion is joyous and happy. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace." "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her : and happy is every one that retaineth her."

RESULTS OF FAMILY PRAYER.

We would experience the most glorious results, if the family altar was erected in the house of every christian of every denomination in the land. Family piety would then reign in every christian household, as it did in that of Lydia, of Cornelius, and Mary and Martha. The light of the church would be kept ever bright and burning, and would continue to shine on brighter and brighter unto "coming of the perfect day." The churches would grow in holiness, in usefulness, in numbers, and in moral power. Instead of occasional revivals, and temporary excitements and relapsing into the coldness of death—instead of having to mourn over the coldness and desolations of Zion, every church would keep thoroughly awake ; the standard of piety would be raised ; every christian would be active at home, where the field is inviting, the harvest plenteous and laborers few ; our children would be converted ; our prayer-meetings would be better attended, and christians qualified by practice and willing to pray whenever called upon ; our Sabbath Schools would be crowded, every christian would become a co-laborer with his pastor ; every instrumentality for the propagation of the Gospel would be encouraged ; our pastors would be supported comfortably and independently, and not forced into secular avocations to earn a subsistence for their families. We should see all around us a vigorous, cheerful, consistent piety ; always warm, always working—always ready to do the Master's will.

JOHN C. FOSTER, Moderator.

J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk.

J. W. TAYLOR, in account with the Union Baptist Association.

DR.

To am't reported by Com. on Finance,.....	231 65
To premium on coin in the above with \$2 00 afterwards contributed,.....	4 60
To am't collected subsequently for Home Missions from Ehon Church,.....	34 00
Pickensville Church,.....	35 20
	—————\$305 45

CR.

By am't paid State Convention as follows :

For Foreign Missions,.....	65 50
“ Home “	122 70
“ Bible Fund,.....	18 25
	—————206 45
By am't paid Eld. J. N. Acker,.....	12 00
By am't paid for printing Minutes,.....	61 00
By am't on hand for ministerial aid,.....	1 00
By am't retained for services as clerk,.....	25 00
	—————\$305 45

CORRECTION.—On the last line but one, on page 13 of Circular Letter, read “*fruits* of his conversion” instead of “family of his conversion.”

NAMES OF BAPTIST MINISTERS

IN THIS ASSOCIATION, WITH THEIR POST OFFICES.

JAS. DELOACH,.....	Reform, Pickens County, Ala.			
R. B. WILKINS,.....	"	"	"	"
J. W. WHITE,*.....	"	"	"	"
J. H. CASON,.....	Carrollton,	"	"	"
I. HOLLINSWORTH,.....	"	"	"	"
J. N. ACKER,.....	"	"	"	"
W. ASHCRAFT,.....	"	"	"	"
S. HILDRETH,*.....	"	"	"	"
M. TAYLOR,*.....	Gordo,	"	"	"
D. DUNCAN,.....	Yorkville,	"	"	"
W. F. SPRAGINS,.....	"	"	"	"
G. M. LYLES,.....	"	"	"	"
M. W. REGAN,.....	"	"	"	"
J. S. WOOTEN,.....	Providence,	"	"	"
A. M. HANKS,.....	Pickensville,	"	"	"
A. A. SPILLAR,.....	"	"	"	"
J. M. LAND,.....	"	"	"	"
J. W. TAYLOR,.....	"	"	"	"
ISHAM PARKER,.....	Pleasant Grove,"	"	"	"
JACOB PARKER.....	Pleasant Grove,"	"	"	"
M. P. SMITH,.....	Union, Greene	"	"	"
J. D. CHANDLER,*.....	Cushing, Tuscaloosa,	"	"	"
J. C. FOSTER,.....	Foster's,	"	"	"
M. M. BLAYLOCK,.....	Columbus, Lowndes county, Miss.			

ORDAINED MINISTERS,.....20

LICENTIATES,*.....4